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# A MEMENTO

OF

## Ancestors and Ancestral Homes,

WRITTEN FOR

HER NIECES AND NEPHEWS

BY

MARGARET RIVES KING.

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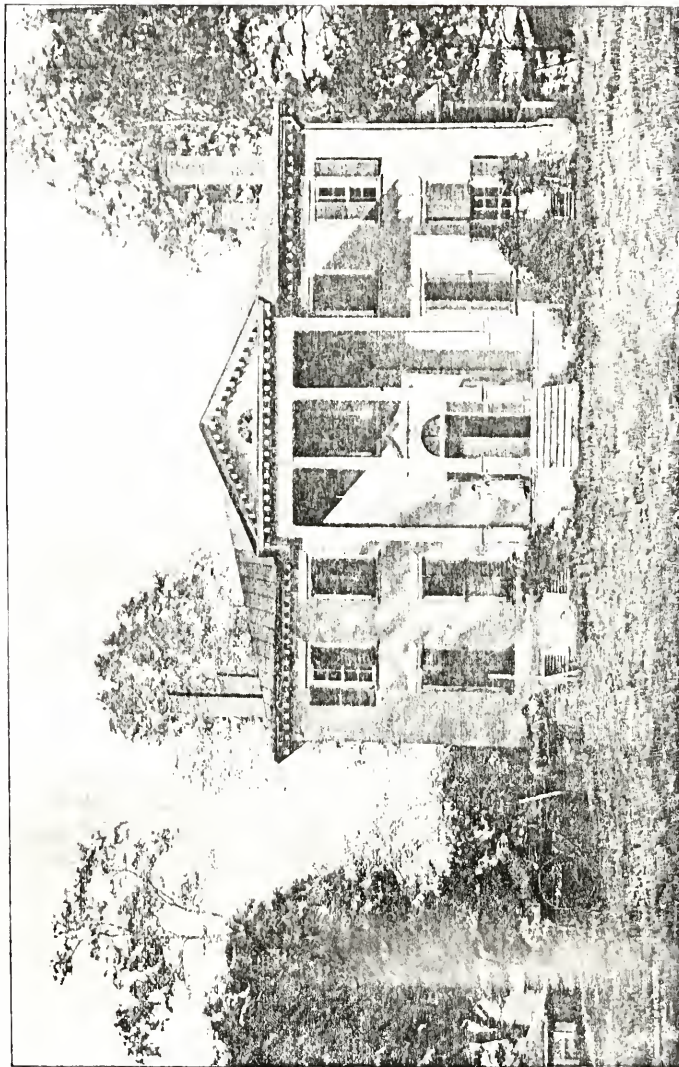
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## DEDICATION.

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TO MY

NIECES AND NEPHEWS WHO ARE STILL HERE,

TO THE

DEAR ONES WHO HAVE PASSED BEYOND,

TO

ALL MY KINSFOLK WHO MAY COME HEREAFTER,

I Dedicate these pages,

*Thus making a loving communion between*

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

MARGARET RIVES KING.

CHRISTMAS, 1890.



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## I.—ANCESTRAL HOMES IN VIRGINIA.

IT has been with me a great desire through all my life to collect incidents concerning the worthy lives of ancestry from whom our own immediate family has sprung; not as a prop for any vain pride, but in finding noble traits in those who have lived before me, to establish their virtues in my mind as incentives to noble deeds—to a life worthy of those ancestors.

In this spirit I now begin a work for my nieces and nephews, which I hope will give them both entertainment and profit. In my talks with you, dear children, it has always been my aim to fix in your hearts a high and virtuous desire to lead such lives as Christian men and women should do. I have endeavored to help you in counteract-



ing the evil tendencies of the age; and to me the exaggerated irreverence of the present times is the root from which will spring a poison which may embitter the mortal days of generations to come. Small beginnings grow into large evils, and the scorn which is now shown in a greater degree certainly than in the past generation, for all the traditions and experiences of the Past, I have hoped that you would avoid. The very beginning of the cultivation of reverence is first, the homage due to father and mother, then to the worthy old people about you, which will lead to a reverence for all that is good in the Past—to the honor that is due to a virtuous and gentle ancestry. This course will plant in the heart that veneration which will have its culmination in the noblest of all adoration—the worship of the Father and Ruler of all things.

I shall not only tell you of people but of old homes, old ways of life. My own experiences have led me through beautiful paths,



and a very varied life. Up to a certain point the flow of daily life was the same for your grandmother Longworth and myself. She, you know, was my dear and only sister. To know of her will give you a greater interest in what I may have to record of myself. Our father was Doctor Landon Cabell Rives; our mother, Annie Maria Towles. They had four children who lived to mature life, and who married. Your grandmother and I had two brothers, Landon and Edward, who chose for their life work the profession of medicine. At the beginning of the civil war, in 1861, they were residents of Virginia. Landon having married Letitia, the daughter of General Edward Watts of Roanoke. They were both surgeons in the Confederate service. Landon, my oldest brother, died in the first year of the war from pneumonia, contracted by exposure and overwork in his hard service. He held a high position as surgeon in General Lee's army. My brother Edward passed through all the four years of the



war in active service, distinguishing himself in his work, and, at the close of the war came to Cincinnati, entering upon the practice of his profession, and gaining reputation as an able lecturer in the Ohio Medical College, where he had been called to fill a professorship. He married Miss Marie Thompson of Hillsboro, whom you know and love as your "Aunt Marie." Edward died at Hillsboro in September, 1886. Both my brothers were men of ability, of singularly good manners, and cultivated gentlemen. Surgery was the branch of their profession they preferred, thus showing the influence of heredity as coming from the Cabell ancestors, who, as far back as can be traced in every generation, brought out distinguished surgeons. As writers and lecturers they both distinguished themselves, and left valuable evidence of their literary ability and usefulness in their profession.

My father was descended on his mother's side from the Cabells. My mother on her ma-





ternal side from the Lewis's. Both were historical families in the early history of the country, of whose influence and position I shall have much to tell you, many things of great interest.

My father and mother were natives of Virginia, and their children were all born there, except the youngest son, Edward, who was born in Cincinnati. The recollections of my early home and life in this beautiful region, are full of joy. We lived in Nelson county, in the region called Piedmont, because lying at the foot of the Blue Ridge mountains, in the beautiful valley bordered by the James river.

Our house was large and well arranged, with great porches and verandahs, which were much used through the Southern States, where it was much more the custom to live in the open air than in the more northern regions. The climate of the southern part of Virginia is much milder than this, as is shown by the natural growth and productions of the soil. Our lovely verandahs were covered with



vines of honeysuckle, sweet briar, and the gorgeous yellow jessamine. My mother had great love for flowers, and was so skillful in her cultivation of them, to which she had trained the excellent gardeners, that she was the admiration, I might say envy, of all the ladies around, but her character was too lovely to call forth the latter improper feeling.

The garden was a marvel of beauty, and in February the hyacinth, the tulip, the jonquil and narcissus, were in full flower. The sweet violet and the mignonette were such favorite flowers with my mother that they were encouraged to grow every-where in profusion. But marvelous in richness was the great circle elevated into a little hillock, where, almost the year round, the beautiful little blue violets hid themselves under the rich green foliage, which all through the winter never lost its freshness. The outlook from our nurseries was toward the beautiful blue mountains, which raised themselves pile upon



pile, fainter and fainter blue, till the most distant mingled with the azure of the sky. The range terminated toward the south with the peaks of Otter—two grand sugar-loaf mountains—and then was lost in distance. I have never seen a more lovely mountain prospect, and to this early experience of beauty in nature I attribute all that I have of poetry, and all my capacity to enjoy to the fullest extent every thing that is beautiful.

The woods were grand, chiefly of oak, and such grand oaks—each itself a monarch. The undergrowth was of whortleberry, sweet shrub, wild roses, azalea, and laurel, and the ground, where exposed, besprent with every hue of smaller wild flowers. A little blue daisy, with a bright golden center, seemed to bloom for the very love of life and a desire to throw joyousness in the pathway of any who passed by.

The trees were festooned with vines of honeysuckle, wild grape, and yellow jessa-



mine, and you may be sure that the whole air was full of fragrance. Through these beautiful woods my dear little sister Annie (your grandmother in after years), and I, with our dear old "mammy"\* would love to roam,—generally accompanied by our faithful old dog Carlo, who would have died for our defense at any time, and two or three merry-hearted choice little darkies, who were trained with care to be our little maids and future house servants.

In the woods, not far from the house, was the spring house, through which rushed the water, dashing beyond over its pebbly rocky bed. This picturesque little house for milk, and butter, and cream—I wish I could bring up before you in all its wild beauty, the very headquarters I am sure of "Brer Fox and Brer Rabbit;" for, seated on those moss covered stones, we listened to the very tales which are now told as folklore of the negro

\*This was the name given to the negro nurses in the olden time.





race—and truly did my faithful little heart believe every word which came from my blessed old mammy's lips. If a nocturnal visit was made by some pilfering negro at any time, we were sure to hear that those pestiferous little imps, Brer Fox or Brer Rabbit, had invaded the spring house. No theft was ever committed that was not laid at their broad door.

I really can not believe that the negroes are as criminal in their ideas of theft and falsehood as are those races on a higher level. Their falsehoods seem to be the effect of imagination which they themselves are persuaded have truth. I could never believe that the kind-hearted, faithful, venerable Uncle Abel deliberately lied when he was detected and gave his account of Aunt Fanny's pipe, which he had stolen. "Law honey, sho's yore bawn dat's Aunt Fanny pipe; whar you think I get it? I was waukin 'long de big road and I hearn sumpfin clippity clip, clippity clip, an' I stop an' I look, an' sho's



you bawn 'twas ole Mother Molly Cotton jes in front a me. I holler, 'Dat you Mother Molly Cotton;' but she didn't 'spon.. I holler agin, 'Mother Molly Cotton, howdy; whar you boun fur?' But she jis shake her tail, and she nuvver say nuthin. So I look; and law! chile, what you think I see? Aunt Fanny pipe stickin out at de bag on her back dat she try to kiver with her tail. I grab it, honey, and here 'tis. Law! I's out of bref I run so hard, cos I was feared Sister Fanny time comes to set in de chimbly cornder and smoke. I'se mighty hungry."

Faithfully did Aunt Fanny believe the tale, and Uncle Abel's reward was a smoking dish of bacon and greens. This Uncle Abel was a character, and a picture with his little bench legged fice, Mingo, at his heels. He was head gardener until with age and rheumatism he was disabled, and relegated, on fine days, to the task of picking weeds out of the gravel walk, when he was still further adorned by the staff over which he bent, and a well



wooled sheep-skin tied on behind ready to protect and cushion his seat. Only on sunny days did the old man venture out, with the faithful Mingo ever at his side. The time came when Uncle Abel and Mingo had to be brought from the "quarters" in a tumbler cart (or, as the negroes called it the "tumbler cart"), and dumped on the gravel walk, for he was faithful to his weeds, and always believed that the place would go to destruction if he and Mingo failed in their duty. Oh, those faithful old darkies, those blessed old days, when all the goodness of the heart was called forth to comfort and protect them! How I loved to knit socks and stockings to keep them warm. How I loved to carry nice food to Aunt Sukey, Aunt Rachel, Aunt Sal—all the superannuated old servants—and read from the Bible to them.

I have never seen more beautiful illustrations of Christian character than among the slaves of former days, and never have had more lasting impressions of true religious



teachings, than from those humble, faithful, devoted hearts. My mother had a Sunday-school for all the negroes on the plantation. The old and middle-aged were not compelled to come, but the children had to consider it a duty, and it was always a pleasure too for them to come in their Sunday clothes to "de big house, and to hear mistis talk so good," and to get cake, which was always baked on Saturday for them. It was easy to teach moral and religious truths, but very difficult to stimulate the intellectual part except in rare cases, and then truth compels me to say that all opportunities were given—books supplied, positions for clerkship given, as "body servants." The valet I have known, in more instances than one, to be the private secretary of his master. A great affection existed between the owners and the slaves; they were made comfortable and happy; indeed, it was to the master's interest so to act, and the case of a cruel master was exceptional. One such, and only





one, existed in our neighborhood, and that man was a pariah whilst he remained. Finally he had to go off, and my noble old grandfather bought all the slaves of this cruel man he could secure, especially those who had married in the neighborhood. He had the wealth and the heart to do it. I tell you these things, for slavery no longer exists, and although a better state of things has come and right has prevailed, many false ideas exist in regard to the crime of slavery—the better side is rarely spoken of. I knew this better side, and it had its beautiful phases, and developed splendid characters on both sides.

It was in the far south and south-west, where the slaves were left to overseers, generally northern men, that they were treated with a cruelty which is revolting to every human heart. Just as in Ireland absenteeism is the root of all the trouble. As I have said above, the older negroes were not compelled to attend my mother's Sunday-school,



because Sunday was their own day, and they had their own "meetings," and their own preachers. It was generally so arranged that the meetings would be held at the neighboring plantations successively, thus giving a sort of social aspect which was wonderfully enjoyed. When the turn came for the Bellevue "people," as they liked to be called, all hands were busy for the "barbecue" they were to have in the woods, after "meet-in'" was over. It was very funny to see the "fineries" displayed, for the cast-off bonnets and ribbons and flowers of the young "mistisses," were brought out on gala occasions as far preferable to the decent plainer clothing with which they were well supplied. Master's old hats for years past, and bonnets of every shape and size—a perfect fancy ball, which would strike envy into the hearts of all present searchers into old closets and garrets.

The servants whose occupations were about the house and gardens, lived within the in-



closures about the grounds. The "field hands" lived in a little collection of houses called the "quarters." Each family had its own cabin, built either of stone or hewed logs, plastered, always perfectly comfortable, with porches covered with vines, the favorite vine being the gourd or the hop vine. Each cottage had its own garden, large enough for vegetables and flowers, and arrangements for poultry with which these people were well supplied, and from which they made quite a sum of money, by selling to the "big house" and in the country town. A portion of every day was allowed them to keep their own affairs in order. These little houses clustered around the overseer's house. Under my observation, these dignitaries were selected with the greatest care, and were always kind and considerate to the negroes, encouraging in them music and dancing, of which they were excessively fond. "The corn shuckings" were great occasions for merry-making, also what they called "de hog



killin' time," when every little darkie's mouth was greasy with roast pig tails and "cracklin bread." Indeed some of the white's skins were not proof against the fascinations of these unctuous temptations.

In speaking of the little revenues collected by the enterprising and industrious among these people, reminds me of a singular instance of success in the husband of our "mammy"—the worthy "Uncle Obey." He was head carpenter on the plantation, and developed such genius for cabinet making, that he was sent for a while to Lynchburg, to get instructions and ideas. He did so well on his return, and was so faithful, that my father gave him many opportunities to work for himself; and from adjacent counties, as well as in the county town of Lovingsston, he had many orders in cabinet work, and began to lay up for himself in bank, and after a few years his accumulations were such, that he rarely had less than three or four hundred dollars in bank. He





had a generous heart, and gave freely in many ways. One of this noble negro's benefactions was an annual contribution to the Colonization Society of Virginia, which at that time sent out, at regular periods, a ship to Liberia, with emigrants and provisions. No one was forced to emigrate, but all were encouraged—masters to free their slaves, and families to seek the new homes. Obey's freedom was finally given him, but it was one of those instances which proved how important it was that the negro should be prepared for freedom. As soon as the sustaining arm under him was removed, and he left friends and home behind him, he pined away and died, without having had any of the anticipated advantages of freedom, longing for the old life and the old home.

Many illustrations might be given of the slave's own estimate of his condition of bondage, and the preference always accorded to the life under a good master. My father's brother, Mr. William C. Rives, when he went



as ambassador to the court of France, took with him his coachman, footman, and my aunt's maid. Of course these servants were free as soon as they entered France. My uncle had told them this would be the fact, and after being there four years they gladly returned to the old state of things, to friends and home. A similar experience was that of the valet—or, as he was called, the “body servant”—of my grandfather, and my aunt's maid, on the occasion of a visit to my father and mother in Cincinnati. My grandfather, immediately on his arrival, told these servants they were in a free state—by his act of bringing them there, they were no longer slaves—and he wished them to go about and see for themselves and decide for the future, whether they would return to their former condition, or whether they would accept their freedom. Many civilities were offered these negroes, many enticements to remain in Cincinnati, but when the visit was ended they voluntarily



and joyfully clung to the master, and returned to their old life with happy hearts.

I might fill pages in telling you of the beautiful life our dear father and mother made for us in their picturesque Virginia home, nestled at the foot of the Blue Ridge range of mountains, separated by wide, highly cultivated valley lands from the wild "Ragged Mountains"—spurs of the far grander blue mountains in the distance. I have felt all through my life the influence of that grand mountain home, with all its out-door vigorous life, and still, at three score and ten, my blood is sent bounding through my veins when I recall those bright days of long ago.

Happy, happy, is the childhood, passed with nature in her many beautiful aspects. Those who have not known a mountain home in childhood, can never know the freshness, the intensity of happiness, of merely living and breathing. This life comes back to me as an idyl. The beauty and grace of our mother, the whole charm of her life, which



drew such devotion from our chivalric father, brought up in days when men still revered and adored women, comes up to me as an experience which excites all the gratitude of my nature. If it were only one point to be remembered, it is the early introduction of my sister and myself into the world of literature. In all my father's leisure hours he read aloud to my mother, and their tastes were for the highest and most refined. My father read well, and as we sat at their feet with our dolls and toys, we listened to and comprehended noble thoughts well expressed; thus were we introduced into the world of letters, which was ever after the golden happiness of our lives.

I must now tell you of the ancestral home, the beautiful residence of my grandfather, Mr. Robert Rives. Oak Ridge was known all over the state for its beauty and for its princely hospitalities, as extended by one of the finest specimens of an old Virginia gentleman.





The ancestors of Mr. Rives came to this country from England. They chose their homes in south-eastern Virginia near Petersburg; from thence went forth our grandfather. He established himself in Richmond as a merchant, for the export of wheat and tobacco to foreign lands. He became very wealthy, sending out his own ships to Cadiz, to Liverpool, and to Glasgow. The fine wines brought back from Spain and France filled the capacious wine-cellars, and assisted in the generous hospitalities, for which this old Virginia country seat was celebrated. When Mr. Rives married Miss Margaret Cabell, the beautiful daughter of Colonel William Cabell of Union Hill, he left the general management of his mercantile affairs to his junior partner, and commenced the building of his future beautiful home. The site of the house was on a rising ground, at the foot of quite a high spur of the Blue Ridge mountains, separated from it by a fine clear gurgling brook, rushing over a bed of rocks and pebbles.



The ground at the back of the house was terraced down to the mountain brook, and made what was called the Falling Garden; planted with every variety of beautiful flowers, roses and jessamine, white and yellow, abounding.

The plateau upon which the house was situated, sloped off into extensive fields and woodland. The finest oaks adorned the spot for the house—

“Grass like green velvet,  
Gravel walks like gold,  
Bosses of shrubs, embosoming of flowers  
Wind you thro’ sprinkled trees.”

To my childish eyes, there never were halls so wide, rooms so large, nor ceilings so high; but when I returned in after years I found that my child eyes had gone beyond actual measurement, and that I had possibly seen as much vastness elsewhere; but in one thing I had indulged no extravagant ideas and that was in the mode of life, the order and management of this fine old home. The floors



throughout the house were of oak, so deftly laid as to make their joinings undiscernible, and waxed and polished so beautifully that the reflections were like a mirror.

Such numbers of well trained servants having the pride of ownership, were sufficient for the perfection of all house work. Real ladies and gentlemen in manners were those old time house servants, who imitated the ways and high breeding of "master and mistress." They were all descendants for generations of family servants, and by observation and heredity learned refined ways. It was a pleasure to be waited upon by those who were so appreciative of the wishes and needs of gentlefolk. I was very young when I first learned to admire the beautiful Oriental art, for the carpets and rugs were brought from Turkey, and the china of India adorned the beautiful polished mahogany dinner table, always attended by three efficient waiters. "Uncle Jimmy," with his shining bald head, was chief butler, and always two aids-de-camp



under his training. He could not shake his "ambrosial locks," but his "nod" was as potent as Jove's. Much of the material for the building of the house had to be brought from England, for the house was built at the close of the eighties of seventeen hundred—making it now, while I write, a century old.

Union Hill, the home and birthplace of my grandmother, is one of the oldest and finest homes in Virginia, and with its paneled walls, odd stairways, queer recesses, and unexplored closets and attics, occult hiding-places for the children, is a place for romance writers to investigate. Of course it was "haunted." It had its ghosts, and grand old Cabells they must have been, for they were a handsome race, with aquiline nose and great brown eyes.

It was one thing I liked about those old slavery days, that so much of the weird was in the very air, by the presence of that highly imaginative people. No neighborhood was without its haunted house, and strange tales





abounded of nightly visitants, and as every home had its own cemetery, a hushed awe was ever instilled into the younger members of the family. Perhaps this superstition is wrong, but it is mingled with good, and has its restraining influence. A lesson of control always came with the passing by the "graveyard;" then, if at no other time, with hushed and bated breath, and bowed heads, we obediently followed "mammy."

I am not sure that in after years the nerves may not be troubled by these experiences of childhood, but we do not believe enough in the supernatural. It is better to take it in this way, than not at all. "Aunt Sal" was, if human testimony may be relied upon, a witch. She was said to be over a hundred years old, but this is the claim of every old negro. That Aunt Sal was a witch was simply an oracular statement, but had the good effect of insuring for her the obsequious attention of all the negroes, young and old, and the white children showed all manner



of tenderesses to gain the good graces of the formidable witch.

An arrangement peculiar to the old Virginia life, was the custom of building, at short distances from the main house, smaller buildings for the accommodation of gentlemen guests and families with children—thus, in the latter case, preventing the inroads of unruly little guests upon the system and elegance of the larger mansion. At my grandfather's the library occupied a well arranged, charming building, shaded by beautiful trees and covered with vines, which was called "Mars Robert's office." All these details are to open out to you a mode of life now passed away, and which depended so much for its completeness upon the well-trained slave, that with the wiping out of the institution of slavery it can never again exist.

My grandfather had a family of seven sons and three daughters. Landon Cabell Rives, my father, was the eldest. William Cabell Rives, the second son, was distinguished in



the political history of the country, as senator when Clay, Webster, Calhoun, were his compeers. Twice he represented the government as ambassador to the court of France. George and Robert were gentlemen of wealth and influence, living, on their estates in Albemarle, lives of culture and refinement. Henry and James died early. Alexander, the youngest son, a lawyer of great ability, and at the time of his death a judge of the District Court of the United States. Two of the daughters married. The oldest, our dear Aunt Peggy, of whom you have often heard me speak, remained single as mistress of her father's house after her mother's death. She was a grand woman, of the highest type of the old Virginia housewife, and was known and admired throughout the state as the accomplished mistress of one of the most hospitable and elegantly appointed homes in the "Old Dominion."

I wish I could convey to you an accurate picture of this thoroughly good and gracious



woman. With all the gentle ways and elegancies of the most dainty lady, an ability as mistress of a home of luxury and style, the one to whom a family of more than two hundred slaves looked for their comfort and happiness, fulfilling every duty with perfect ease, and making herself the good angel of all who came under her care. Many were the opportunities she had to change her lot in life, for her hand was sought by the noblest in the land, but the path of duty was for this Christian woman the only path, and it was her happiness to minister to her father through all his later life.

My grandfather Rives was, as I remember him, a man of fine presence, fair fresh complexion, blue eyes, and very light hair, which was mingled with white, making it probably a lighter hue than in youth. His manners were very dignified, his habitual disposition earnest and serious, but combined with an amount of humor which made him a charming companion. So appreciative was he of humor





in others, that a good teller of stories and anecdotes was always a very welcome guest. And when the wit of the neighborhood, a jolly, merry old lawyer, made his regular visitations, the old home rang with merry peals of laughter, echoed from behind doors and under windows by the appreciative negroes, who gathered from all sides to listen to "Marse Spottiswood Garland's funny stories."

Mr. Rives was scrupulously neat in his dress, and required it in all his surroundings. His habitual dress was, in winter, blue broad-cloth coat with metal buttons, drab pantaloons and gaiters, and a cream white cloth vest; in summer, a similar coat, with nankeen pantaloons, and white marseilles vest. The nankeen had to be of the finest imported Chinese goods. His only adornment was a heavy fob chain, with seals and key, very massive, as was then the fashion.

My grandfather to the last days of his life (he died eighty-three years of age), was very active, and as was customary with the southern



gentlemen, passed many hours of the day in the saddle. His horses were always fine—his own riding horse blooded, and perfectly trained in all his gaits, and a marvel of beauty. It was his habit to ride over his plantation daily, inspect at regular intervals the “quarters,” the mills, the field work, and every interest on the place. This one plantation contained, I will hardly venture now to state how many acres, but I know in one direction we could drive fifteen miles and still be within the limits of the Oakridge plantation. There was a beautiful appearance of repose about these large plantations, and a solitude sometimes oppressive; but where, as on this plantation, the cultivated fields of grain, vast in extent, the bright green tobacco, gave mute companionship, and the feeling of a human presence by which all this was accomplished. There, too, came more decided suggestions of life in the lowing of the great herds of cattle, the bleating of the flocks of sheep, and the numberless birds



~~Men~~ <sup>who made</sup> the air palpitate with their song.

The center of the industries of the plantation was at a beautiful picturesque spot on a rushing mountain stream, where were the mills, the tanneries, the distillery, etc.; for on these large plantations every thing was provided which was needed for so large a family. On this one estate of my grandfather there were over two hundred slaves to be provided for—a family always increasing, as there were many more births than deaths, and my grandfather never sold his negroes. They were sometimes dispersed among the plantations of his children, but families were never separated. This lovely spot, where the industries of the plantation were collected, was known by the name of Variety Mills. Great rocks were thrown around by some pristine convulsion of nature, and wild growths of cedar and pine took a foothold in every gorge and crevice.

In the spring all was made gay by the beau-



tiful bloom of the rhododendron and azalea, and the air joyous with the sound of mill wheels and rushing waters. Numbers of goats were encouraged to give their picturesque effect to the scene. Over all this wild beauty, on a lovely terraced hill, was the home of our dear Aunt Lucy, my father's youngest sister, whose husband had been given especial interests in this part of the estate. This lovely home seemed to rest in a nest of flowers, the beautiful star-shaped white jessamine clinging to my memory as holding sway over all.

A very interesting part of the old plantation life, was that each plantation had to be a little cosmos. No railroads then, nor water travel, not even good highways, for I well remember our journeys could never be made but in a coach and four. No one drove in those days in a two-horse carriage, and it was a delight to me even as a child to be behind four spanking spirited grays, with proud "Uncle Peyton" on the box, and Tom the





footman behind; for it was thus, in those days, the footman rode, ready to jump down and "scotch" the wheels on the bad hills with no delay.

From the sheep's back, from the cotton and flax in the fields, through the process of dyeing, carding, spinning, and weaving, the tailoring, the shoemaking, and the habit-making—all was done on the plantation under the supervision of the mistress, who had her accomplished trained aids-de-camp under her command. All this responsibility made splendid women of those fine old dames of those by-gone slavery days. Each center of an industry was a scene of cheerful bustle, and the advent of the mistress, in her daily round of inspection, was always looked for with pleasure.

The dye house, the rooms for carding, spinning and weaving, were all places of interest, and many a lesson I have taken in each department. The whizzing of the spinning wheels, and the thumping of the looms, were music



to my ear. Those days were days of hand work—no machinery then to expedite, but deft and busy hands had to employ days and weeks to complete the work of now a few hours. There was a high tide of ambition then among the dames of high degree, vying in the production of the most tasteful plaids, the best carpets, the most beautiful rugs. Many of those productions were very fine, and received welcome recognition from the state fairs of silver pitchers and goblets, etc. One of the most remarkable evidences of ingenuity and skill in weaving, can be seen in the beautiful fringed bed spreads made sixty years and more ago. As tasteful and beautiful, in their patterns and texture, as the finest productions of the machine loom work of the present day.

I do not know why, especially, I should tell you of my dear grandmother Towles's quiet home at Flatcreek—for it was not the birth-home of her children, which was a stately city mansion in Lynchburg, where during



my grandfather's life they lived in all the taste and abundance that wealth could give, and from that home my mother was married.

My grandfather's investments in the west were failures; he left his family comfort and ease, but not abundance. So when he died, my grandmother, with four sons and one daughter, removed to a beautiful farm—a portion of the property still left—about nine miles from Lynchburg. The word which expresses the home so dear to my child heart is—lovely:—love in its every combination might be applied, for there dwelt love in all its unselfishness.

It was wide valley land, a moor-like region, filled with abundant springs, and full streams of water leaping over rocky beds from their mountain home in the distance, to mingle with the waters of the river beyond. There is a great charm about these fen lands; the beautiful, weird mist-effects, the intensity of greenness, the long stretches of meadow



lands, besprent in their season with wild roses, alder, and every variety of prairie flowers, the rich crimson cardinal, the bright orange, the tender blue, the cheerful pink, the forest lands so rich in foliage and undergrowth. In such a setting was the home of my grandmother. It was a quaint old house, built in colonial times, when the oak wainscoting reached within a few feet of the ceiling, and over the high wooden mantelpieces were queer little cupboards, inaccessible places of deposit for silver and other valuables. All manner of little hiding-places about: slides in the panels of the wainscoting, where queer old bundles of letters might be found.

Then on every side were porches covered with vines, so luxuriant in the misty atmosphere. No one thought of sitting in the house in summer, and tea and luncheon, sometimes breakfast, were served in the open air.

The lawn, of richest verdure, sloped to the





main road, which was not far from the house, but all dust was kept out by thick hedges of lilac, privet, and althea. The glorious old locusts spread their delicate acacia shadows, and I suppose our visits must always have been at the same season, for I think of them with those beautiful pendant creamy blossoms filling the air with the perfume of an orange grove.

The glory, however, of the lawn, was the water. Just at the entrance to the grounds was a glorious spring, gushing out from a moss covered, fern decorated rock. It was just on the road side, and here it was that my dear old grandmother's greatest pleasure was to show her hospitable heart, by making easy access to this refreshing spring for every thirsty wayfarer. It was a favorite play-ground for the children, and many a happy little heart has extended the hand bearing the cup of cold water to the weary passer by.

Then, too, apart from the stream flowing



away from this spring, was the pebbly bedded crystal trout stream, which gurgled along at the foot of the lawn almost lost amid the wild roses and ferns, and grasses, and fragrant mint, which grew so thick on its border. It was beautiful to watch the little golden fish flashing through the water, and, I am sorry to say, too often arrested in their happy thoughtless life to furnish a savory dish for the breakfast table.

My uncles were full of *bonhomie* and kindness, and nothing was too troublesome that would give amusement to the children. And such rides, and such drives never were had. On one occasion, our uncle William permitted a menagerie man to pitch his tent in a field about a mile from the house, for no other reason than to give the children unrestrained access to a real "show" of lions, tigers, elephants and monkeys, above all, daily rides on the circus ponies. Imagine our delight—a whole week of this.

My grandmother was shocked, thinking it



would be a grievous nuisance, bringing all the neighborhood, white and black so near; but a good thick forest intervened, and all behaved with propriety, so there was no annoyance, and we enjoyed ourselves immensely. Only at night little hearts palpitated lest lions and tigers might get loose, and you may be sure good old mammys availed themselves of this weapon to keep naughty little folks in order, and for many a day lions and tigers were abroad in the woods ready to devour wicked little children.

Another pleasure was in watching the great mountain wagons—which were ships of the land, as the camel has been called the ship of the desert—drawn by six horses, great animals with gay trappings, stepping, in the most magnificent lordly way, to the music of bells which circled above the head of each horse. These vehicles were the railway cars and canal boats of those days. All the produce of the mountain region was carried to Richmond in these immense wagons, and all dry goods and



groceries, etc., were brought back in the same way. No railroad, no canal, had been thought of in the Old Dominion, and people were quite as happy, and lived just as well as they do now in all the bustle of steam, electricity, and machinery.

About fifteen or twenty miles from Flatcreek was Vauckse, the home of my uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Dabney, situated, however in quite different surroundings. Mountainous and rocky, and almost inaccessible, was this beautiful, refined home. My uncle had inherited from his father, Judge Dabney, a large estate. Miles of fields and woodlands separated this home from any near neighbors. It would have been a lonely place but for the cheerfulness, and intelligence, and cultivation, which abounded in a large family circle.

My uncle had a very extensive library, and had within himself a fund of learning. They were hospitable, and their large house was always filled with company, and as





the beautiful daughters grew up to womanhood, Vauchuse was one of the most famed and frequented homes of hospitable old Virginia.





## II.—OLD VIRGINIA LIFE.

STRANGE contrasts existed in that old slavery life—bright lights and dark shadows. Not only in his individual nature is the negro full of opposites, but also, very varied are the peculiarities of race. The grave and the hilarious alternate strangely.

When young, a more jovial, merry-hearted set could not be found, but as age comes on, the negro is very serious and meditative. This peculiarity might have been more marked in the slave, who looked forth upon a life of bondage ending only with death. The solemn owl-like look of the veteran uttering his oracle was very impressive to the young, and many a mischievous little brat was arrested by the wise look and sage words of some revered ebony "uncle," and the naughty little



girl was constantly told that "her ma never would have acted that way." So mammas were always thought to be models of excellence and propriety.

There was a sad hush and stillness over these large plantations—something weird—in the great fields of grain and tobacco, maturing into fullness with no appearance of human interference. It was only on occasions of sowing and reaping, or gathering in the grain, that life was apparent, and then the air rang with mirth and laughter. The greatest liberty was given them for fun, singing, dancing, etc.; and by the way I must not forget to mention what they called "patting or clapping juba." It was the accompaniment of a dance by the clapping of hands, first together and then on the legs, in rhythm—sometimes singing was brought in, with whoops and flourishes—it admitted, too, of many contortions, and was altogether an hilarious affair, usually the outburst of the wit of the "quarters."



"Corn shuckings" were occasions of great merry making, always at night by the light of big bonfires, and accompanied by the melodies which only the negro with his banjo can give with full effect, then at the close, a "feast of fat things"—possums, and pigs, 'taters, and corn pone, and plenty of cider and 'simmon beer. No roost of owls could have been graver than the line of superannuated old darkies, who were brought in "tumbler carts" to the feast which nothing would cause them to miss, and yet sitting in all the grimness of age which to them is superiority, frowning upon the frivolities of the actors in the gay scene. Not a smile on any of these grim faces, unmoved by the fun which inspired the comic melodies or the juba dances. It was always a weird scene in the light of the fitful fire of pine knots and light wood; and an interesting sight to the "great folks" from "de big house."

More weird, however, were the night meetings during the times of religious revivals,





then indeed, the whole negro nature in its enthusiasm and fanaticism came out—wild ravings of perturbed spirits, wailing hymns which sounded as if coming from eternal doom, interrupted by the voice of the preacher ever urging on to further excitement. One might suppose that all this would have exhausted any human frame, and have incapacitated those poor creatures from executing any work on the day following; on the contrary, fresh and hearty, and strong, did they come out, ready to do battle night after night in the same way—and it was really a battle hard fought. As a good old mammy once said to me: “Honey, I’sc got religion; I got it by ‘rascelin’” (wrestling).

Provision was made in every neighborhood for church service, and though the church might be consecrated for the use of Episcopalian, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, it was free as a place of worship for all. On my grandfather’s plantation, about a mile from “the house,” he built a little church



which had all the arrangements and appointments of an Episcopal Church, of which he himself was a member. To this church all denominations were invited, but as the village near at hand was well provided with meeting houses, little Trinity was seldom used but by Episcopal clergy. On occasions when the bishop would come, great upheavals would take place, and "Aunt Caty," the venerable, portly, ebony sexton, with her attendant band of little darkies, would carry on such mysterious scrubblings and rubbings as quite to alarm passers by, and cause sensational stories to be started of ghosts of old Rives and Cabells being seen dashing in and out of the deep forest, on coal black horses with fiery eyes, led by jack-o-lanterns, and disappearing in blue lights in the graveyard.

It was a beautiful sight at this little church, on communion Sunday, to see the venerable master kneeling at the chancel, with his devoted servants on either side. In all religious exercises distinctions were laid aside. When



on occasions of the visit of the clergy, the family was called together for morning and evening prayer, the house servants were expected to take their places with the family; but, with their excellent manners and sense of propriety, they would congregate in back places and near the doors. Sometimes respected old servants, blind or deaf, would be led forward to take a more honored place. The relation was beautiful between the family and their dependents. It seemed ever in the hearts of good people that these poor humble creatures, were dependent upon them for all their comfort and happiness,

There was certainly a beautiful side to the institution of slavery, but its dark side was so full of horror it is well that it has passed away. Whether it is best for the negro race to be placed side by side, in the conflict of life, with the more highly organized and gifted Caucasian, is a question for thoughtful heads to work out. Certainly for generations the humble son of Ham will plod



on under many disadvantages, and no longer for him will exist the joyous, irresponsible, child-like life of the old slave days, when it was "massa's" business to see that he was well fed, well clothed and contented.

The hospitality of the old style at the south—or rather, as I knew it in Virginia—in the days of negro slavery, had the largeness, good cheer, and heartiness of old England, and the mode and manners of the old home had been brought by our fathers to the new plantation. The isolation of each portion of the country in the ante-railroad days shut out all outside influence, and old customs were sure to become fixed. Surroundings, too, all tended to keep up association with old England. The homes of every size and style, were finished with English oak, and door knobs, and hinges, and mantel-pieces—indeed, every thing which adorned the house had been brought from "beyond the seas." Wealth had accumulated, and fine taste had kept pace with the ability to indulge.





But of all causes tending to hospitable living in Virginia, nothing was more conducive than the system of negro slavery.

In the character of the negro are those traits which, under a proper development, make even better servants than the boasted domestics of England. Naturally a gentle, affectionate, and imitative race, their service was one of love and devotion, their ways and manners refined, sometimes as much so as the master and mistress whom they served. In well regulated families of the better sort, generation followed generation in the same service. The dignified, reliable butler had always in training the younger aspirants, and the footman was invariably the embryo coachman. The children of the lady's maid, or of the mammy, were always brought up side by side with their future young mistresses, and an affection sprung up between them which nothing could sever. I have seen in old families in Virginia, servants whose manners would have graced any position, and who in affection were so



identified with the interests of those they served as to show, in almost an amusing way, a sense of proprietorship.

Pride was always stimulated on the arrival of a guest, and had any thing happened discreditable to the hospitality of the home, the grey-headed old butler, or the trusted "body servant," would have felt it more keenly than the master. Nothing could be more charming than to see the pride of these faithful old servants in the beautiful young mistress, and amusing enough was it to hear their criticism upon any rash aspirant for her hand.

The plantations were so large as to make it important that every convenient means of locomotion should be supplied—the finest saddle horses for both ladies and gentlemen, and carriages of every form and capacity. I am sorry to say our good ancestors were very uncivilized in the care and condition of their roads, but the terrible hills were made easy by the four fine horses always attached to the family coach.



Dinner parties were of frequent occurrence, and a drive of fifteen or twenty miles was not an obstacle. Four o'clock was considered the fashionable hour for dining; this necessitated after a breakfast at eight, a luncheon, or as it was called a "snack," at twelve, and tea always handed at eight o'clock in the evening. In fine weather the interval between dinner and tea afforded opportunity for driving, an arrangement which is entirely prevented by the present late dinner hour. I am sorry to say that the ladies of the old south, were less fond of out-door exercise than the gentlemen. The enervating influence of a warm climate made the *siesta* very refreshing, and the after dinner nap was more generally indulged in than the afternoon drive.

In those days continental European modes of dinner service were not known; if they were, they were scorned by the devotees to English custom. The courses of a dinner were never more than two after the soup, which began



the meal. The large roast and boil were put on the table at the same time, at opposite ends; fowls and game, and smaller dishes were placed on the sides of the table, the vegetables between. All carving was done at the table on informal occasions; sometimes, in dinners of state, dishes were removed and carved on the side table. A dinner was not considered complete without a freshly boiled ham—which never appeared after the first day on the dinner table—hot, and laid on a bed of spinach or cabbage. Two kinds of wine were always served—claret invariably, and port, Madeira, or sherry, as might be chosen. The second course was the dessert, when appeared such dainties of cream, ices, pastries, jellies, etc., as were a marvel.

Fruits rarely appeared at dinner, they were especially approved at luncheon. I must not forget to speak of a universal custom which I do not approve of, the bowl of "toddy" on the sideboard every day before dinner, of which the gentlemen were expected





to partake; not infrequently a sip was given to the little folks, always eager enough to get it. Children were not allowed to appear at table while still requiring the attention of special servants. The breakfasts were a marvel, for I have never seen such skill in the making of bread and cakes. Four or five kinds of hot bread served always—a delicious fresh loaf of the lightest white bread, the simple corn pone, and the beautiful egg bread, then varying with waffles, muffins, griddle cakes, etc. My only recollection of meats served at this meal were of game, broiled chicken, and cold meats, eggs always, and rich milk. In serving the tea and coffee the sugar and cream were not put in by the lady at the head of the table, but served to each guest to put in at his pleasure.

At luncheon or “snack,” bread and butter, cake, lemonade or raspberry vinegar, fruit in season—beautiful cherries, black-heart, honey-heart, ox-heart, were served in bowls with cracked ice. Tea was very simple. The



lady of the house presiding at the tea table, with the beautiful silver urn and lovely china before her, and the servants bearing trays to the family or guests seated in groups; on these trays were the tea, buttered "beat-biscuit," delicate cake, and thinly sliced ham.

A singular custom was universal in those old days, the mistress always washed the dainty cups and saucers herself, after breakfast and tea. The pretty brass bound cedar "piggins" were placed before her; at her side stood the butler with fresh towels. This was the time for lovely quiet chats with the busy house-wife, whose mornings afterward were always occupied in the different departments of her household affairs. Orders for the day were to be given, not only in the kitchen, but in the various industrial works connected with plantation life. A busy life was that of the southern matron, and yet abundant time was found for self-culture, and all the elegancies of social life.

Provision was made on these great estates



for entertaining many guests. I have known at my grandfather's over thirty persons to be seated at the table, day after day. It would amaze you were I to give you the "menu" of a great "dining day," as it was called. The profusion was something astonishing, but you must remember that profusion in those large households was not extravagance. Many ivory teeth were ready to dispose of any superfluities.

The gentlemen of those days, in Virginia, were fond of fine horses, and always went forth well mounted. Their riding and coach horses were generally blooded animals. My grandfather, your ancestor, was very attentive to his stables; he imported fine horses, and some of the best stock ever brought to this country was imported by him. "Uncle Major," the "master of the stables," was a glorious old athlete, an image of Hercules "carved in ebony." In those days the gentlemen were not averse to the enjoyment of racing, and the pride that Uncle



Major took in "ole massa's" fine horses was beautiful to see. Then no telegraph to bring quick messages, but I remember the news from the Richmond race track came with lightning speed, to announce the triumph of a favorite racer. This news was brought from the last station by Uncle Major himself, in jockey cap and top boots, flags flying, and at the top of his voice proclaiming, "We'se won, we'se won."

The horses for ladies were beautifully trained. My mother's favorite "Fiddle" (he deserved a more poetic name), as soon as she placed her hand upon his beautiful, brown, satiny neck, stretched forth his legs, forward and back, until his body almost touched the ground, when she seated herself on his back with the ease with which she would have taken a chair. With a bound and a toss of his beautiful head, the spirited animal would regain his feet and await the fair rider's further orders.

I must indulge myself in embalming the





memory of my own dear little "Punchinello," who carried me as if rocked in a cradle, by my father's side, when I was only six years of age, a day's journey of thirty miles, and forded the James river at Lynchburg, to the great amusement of the lookers-on. Of course the river was very low, its rocky bed in places being quite bare, but I was immensely proud. It was not intended I should ride the whole distance when we set forth, for my mother, with my little sister and maid, was in her carriage a little in advance, and the footman was at hand to take the pony whenever I should become tired. We were refreshed midway the journey by a feast of wild strawberries. This delicious fruit grew in rich profusion in every uncultivated old field, the only disputant for free and independent occupation being the delicious dewberry, which modestly awaits the pleasure of the strawberry, coming generally a month in advance of its darker hued and more humble friend. It is a picture—these wild



strawberry fields, all aglow with ruby hue—shadowed here and there by the beautiful wild rose and alder.

I must not forget to tell you of one of the indulgences of our childhood, a perfect miniature coach, drawn by two well trained goats in brass mounted harness, and a handsome little negro of eight years of age, in livery of crimson and yellow, on the box to hold the reins—I can not say to drive, for the management of the goats was entrusted to a faithful man who followed at our side. This little fairy coach was perfect in all its parts, and finished with elegance, the lining—as was then the fashion—of red morocco. Our journeys were never over five miles, and generally in advance of the family carriage, where our watchful mother was on the alert to see that all was safe. This little fairy coach was a wonder to all passers by, and the well trained goats were excellent carriage horses, and carried their heads high, as if proud of the load.



Nothing comes back to me with more freshness in those old-time memories than the autumnal hunting parties. The last weeks in October, or the early days of November, was generally the time selected. These days, so full of frosty crispness and brilliant tints, are always inspiriting, and the ease, the social taste, the love of excitement and manly sport, gave great zest to those occasions, and spread around, even among those who did not participate, a joyousness which does one good to remember. The gentlemen of the south had great fondness for out-door life, and hunting and fishing were unfailing sources of delight in leisure hours. The foot hills of the Blue Ridge mountains abounded in game—deer, bear, the smaller game, filled the wild unbroken forests. Never a day passed that the gentlemen were not out with their guns, followed by the pointer and the setter, with an attendant negro with game bag, which was usually brought back well filled.

But those frosty, crisp October days, when



all nature was sparkling, when every blade of grass seemed to have been created for the very purpose of bearing up dewy jewels, and supporting the web of "fairy linen," each slender thread strung with sparkling gems which might have excited a princess's envy. These are days to be remembered, when all was ready to set forth for the mountains to camp out for days. These were occasions which come back, with spirit-stirring sounds of bay-ing hounds, merry laughter, and winding horns. Captain Vaughan, with his pack of fifty hounds, was considered the leader of the sport. Sometimes a dozen gentlemen, mounted on their fine hunters, with servants in charge of camp equipage, and hampers and sacks of provisions, would assemble at a certain point to begin the expected merry-making. My father's house was the nearest point to the camping grounds, and on the beautiful lawn of Bellevue might be seen, annually, as jolly a set of manly development as could anywhere be found outside the border lands





of merrie old England, in its days of highest jollity and merry-making.

Each gentlemen had his "body servant," and sumpter horse well loaded with additions to the good cheer; and the gleaming teeth, and the loud laughter, and the rolling eyes of the happy negroes, who were allowed to give full vent to their merry hearts on these happy occasions, made a scene which spread the contagion of joy to all who witnessed it. For days preparations were going on in every detail—guns cleaned, powder flasks and shot bags filled, bullets molded, cooks at work, and stitches put in by all the busy hands. A great time was this for the little folks, black and white, and little hearts palpitated with joy. The dogs all knew what was coming, and yelped with delight, and ran round in circles, and almost wagged their tails off attempting to express their approval of these vigorous proceedings.

The night preceeding the departure was one of great excitement and interest. Little



folks were tucked away at an early hour, but "mammy's" stories and lullaby songs failed to bring composure, and little eyes had hardly closed in slumber before daylight brought the baying of the hounds and wide-awake child-eyes pleading to be up to see the departure. The hunters' horns had a merry sound, the gay laughter, the substantial breakfast, the neighing horses, and the yelping curs made a melody of joyousness rarely seen. Groups of admiring negroes clustered around, and high in authority appeared Uncle Abel, head of the jokers and the envy of all aspiring little darkies. But the height of Uncle Abel's glory and triumph came on an occasion when he returned with a great buck thrown across the horse on which he was astride; not a smile illumed his face, not a word escaped his lips, but the majesty of Jove was upon his front. At night, before a big pine wood fire, with a steaming dish before him of "Aunt Fanny's" most savory cooking, he gave the whole story of "how massa



killed dat buck," and somehow or other "massa" never could have done it but for his aid.

My father had, on one occasion, a thrilling adventure. Just on the eve of setting out he was called to see a very sick patient, and permitted the hunters to go on, assuring them he should soon follow. He was delayed, however, and did not reach the gorge of entrance to the mountains until quite dark. He thought he could find the camp, but failed; he had lost his way. Repeated discharges of his rifle failed to bring a response, and there in the darkness of a savage wilderness he must pass the night. He tried with his flint to strike a light, but the damp leaves and wood refused to be kindled. The few biscuits he had in his pocket he divided with his faithful horse. After groping around he found a tree against which he could support himself for the night, and was comforted by the good horse now and then putting his soft nose against his shoulder. Again and



again was the rifle discharged, with the same result.

A solemn oppressive stillness reigned, occasionally made more perceptible by the crushing of dead limbs and the rustling of leaves, as if some wild denizen of the forest approached. It was bitter cold, but the warm breath of the affectionate animal, seeking human companionship, gave some comfort. Sleep at last came to the wearied eyes, but only to be broken by a noise,—the crushing of the dead wood around by the tread of some heavy beast, and the almost human shriek of the dismayed horse wild from fear. A moment's observation disclosed two fiery balls peering through the darkness. It was but a moment's work, and the already loaded rifle was raised, and the well aimed ball had its effect, for when the dawn of morning came, a huge mountain panther was seen stretched dead a few feet off.

The search for the lost path was soon successful in the light of day, and strange to





say the camp was not over a few hundred yards distant. The wind had carried the sound from them.

Was there ever any event like an old-time Christmas in the old slavery days? Yes, perhaps, in merrie old England in the long ago; but then was wanting the child-like, simple, and joyous natures, which can only be found in the breasts of those humble, trustful creatures, of the downtrodden race of Ham. Nowhere can perfect hilarity be found united with innocent enjoyment so perfectly, as in those old days among a race whose lives were free from all care, who lived as the lilies of the field, and the sparrows on the housetop. That negro who carefully guarded his hat because it was his own, and left the head "dat was massa's" to take care of itself, explained the whole idea. The master's interest was to guard well his property, to feed him well, to clothe him comfortably, and to make him happy. Think of what joyous hearts—they had only



to do right, and all wants were supplied. Would that we could all fulfill our duty to the Divine Master. Earth would be a paradise.

But I have wandered off from the Christmas times. Such a preparation as was never seen, ushered in the Christmas holiday on every plantation. Bakings, and roastings, and brewing, and candy making, were going on for days. Little hands were busy making caps and pincushions, and all manner of comforts for the old, and rag dolls and toys of every device for the little negroes. Bags of cakes and nuts, and piles of molasses candy; a new suit of warm woolen for every man, a new habit—as it was called—for every woman, bright red and yellow flannel petticoats for the babies. The day was invariably ushered in by the honored “mammy” of the house, in bright turban and brighter smiles, appearing with a waiter filled with goblets of foaming, creamy eggnog, with the accompanying, “Crismus gif, mistis,” “Crismus gif,



massa," and a low curtsy. Oh, that those days of beautiful old "curtsies" should have passed away. The negroes had their pleasure in giving too, the whitest of eggs for "mistis," game for master, nuts and snow-bird traps, and knit mittens for the young folks. The whole week was a merry-making. Every night the "quarters" resounded with the music of the fiddle and the banjo, the peals of jolly laughter accompanying the merry reel.

I do not say the picture I have given you could every-where be seen—doubtless there was a darker side; but I am giving you the bright lights, to show you that those old slavery days were not all horror and sadness, as they are now so generally pictured. I tell you a true story of what I knew of slavery, and I am convinced that in all the older states, where the master overlooked his own affairs, comfort and happiness greatly overbalanced the opposite. Absenteeism was at the root of all the horrors of slavery.



The negro race in slavery was, as a general rule, a joyous race. It was the owner who suffered. If he felt, as every manly heart would feel, the responsibility that was upon him, his load must have been great. I know the women suffered, for the mistress of every family of slaves bore, in her innermost soul the deepest sense of obligation to these kind, affectionate, dependent creatures. Children were brought up to have the most tender feelings of affection and respect for the old negroes, who often exercised an authority quite laughable, extending into the mature years of the young masters and mistresses who had grown up under their eyes.







### III.—ANCESTORS.

**M**Y father, Landon Cabell Rives, was born on the 24th of October, 1790, in Nelson county, Virginia. He received, from his earliest boyhood, the many advantages derived from association with a cultivated and intellectual society. At an early age he entered Hampden Sidney, and afterward William and Mary college, where he graduated. He studied medicine in Philadelphia under the private tuition of Doctor Chapman, and received his diploma from the University of Pennsylvania in 1820.

The first nine years of his professional life were passed in his native state. He removed his family to Cincinnati in 1829, and practiced his profession with great devotion and success for thirty years. No physician



every one lived in Cincinnati who had a larger practice, or who was more truly honored and loved than Doctor Rives. Not only in the practice of medicine was he eminent, but as a medical teacher and writer was he widely and honorably known.

With Doctor Daniel Drake, Doctor Samuel D. Gross, Doctor Willard Parker, and other gentlemen known to fame, Doctor Rives was associated in the faculty of the Cincinnati College. He was afterward a professor in the Ohio Medical College. My father retired from the active duties of his profession about the year 1860, but he continued to reside in Cincinnati, where his warm heart, his noble mind, his perfect example of the old-time gentleman, now so rarely seen, will be long remembered. Doctor Rives died on the 3d of June, 1870, having almost reached the completion of his eightieth year. He departed honored, and beloved, and regretted by all.



## RIVES.

The four families from which your grandmother, Mrs. Annie Rives Longworth, directly descended, were the Rives and Cabell on the paternal side, the Towles and the Lewis on the maternal. Our Rives ancestors came to this country from England about the middle of the seventeenth century—a Dorsetshire family, having for many generations produced people of mark. From Anthony Wood's *Antiquitates Oxoniensis*, published in 1674, book 2, page 149, I get the following sketch of one of the most noted of the family. "Sir Thomas Ryves, a civilian, born in Dorsetshire, and educated at Winchester School, and at New College, Oxford, studied law in Doctors Commons, and distinguished himself greatly in that profession. He was appointed Master of Chancery and King's Advocate, and was knighted by Charles I, whom he served with great ability in the cabinet, and also in the



field during the civil wars. He died in 1651, and was buried in St. Clement Danes, near Temple Bar. He was a learned man, and wrote the Vicar's Plea, *Historia Navalis Antiqua*, and *Historia Navalis Media*."

So well as I can trace, our family are descended from an elder brother of Sir Thomas, Henry Ryves, whose sons bear the names still existing among the Rives in Virginia—Robert, William, Henry, George, James.

Another very distinguished member of the Dorsetshire family was Bruno Ryves, chaplain of Charles I, also Vicar of Stanwell, Middlesex, Dean of Windsor, etc. He was a writer of some celebrity, the author of *Mercurius Rusticus*, etc. There was an emigration from the family during the Cromwellian period, being strong Loyalists. Some went to Ireland, and were distinguished men of learning and ability. Just about that time we trace the Ryves or Rives, in Virginia.

Henry Ryves, whom I take to be our ancestor, was the second son of John Ryves, in





a family of many sons and daughters, who probably scattered in the troublous times of the "Commonwealth." As I have said above, Sir Thomas Ryves was a brother of Henry, our ancestor.

"Among the women, too, arose a writer of fame and distinction in her day, a favorite novelist—Eliza Ryves. She wrote the *Hermit of Snowdon*, besides some popular translations from the French, and was a liberal contributor to the *Annual Register*."—From Blake's *Universal Biographical Dictionary*.

England was not the original home of the Ryves, who trace their family to Languedoc, France, in the neighborhood of Dijon, where the name was spelt Rives. There is at Rookwood a quaint old cabinet of carved oak, bearing the Rives crest—a greyhound couchant—which came from Dijon. It is a rare old relic, and doubtless has ancestral worth.

The first trace of our ancestors in this country is found at Petersburg, Virginia, where the great-grandfather of my father was a



leading man, of high honor and influence, though his name does not appear in political nor in military affairs. The family, when they came to this country, restored the name to the French spelling. One brother of my grandfather removed to Georgia, where are still some of his descendants, as also in Tennessee. The youngest brother, Henry, remained in Virginia. His residence was in Buckingham county, an easy<sup>1</sup> distance for frequent visits to be interchanged. I have a sweet, gentle remembrance of two lovely old great aunts—sisters of my grandfather. They bore the old-fashioned names of Lavinia and Phoebe. With their short waisted gowns, and high crowned caps, and white muslin kerchiefs folded daintily over the bust, they make a picture of kindly, dignified repose, indelibly fixed upon my memory.

#### CABELL.

The Cabells are, without doubt, from southern Europe. Their physique, name, etc.,



point to the fact, and tradition in the family makes Spain the motherland of the Cabells. And those of us who, through imagination, love to wander off to distant realms, can see the orientalism in this remarkable race, and can fancy the blood of some old Saladin in our veins.

That a Spanish *hidalgo* sought the freer air of old England in some century long past, is a fact without dispute, and that it was previous to the year 1517 is attested by the lovely chapel at Frome, in Middlesex county, England built by John Cabell. The old stained glass window in which is represented the coat of arms—a white horse rampant, the bell and cable—is a marvel of beauty. When again any of you may be in England, you must make a pilgrimage to Frome and see the old chapel of your ancestors.

The name of Cabell, in Spanish, is Cabellero; in Italian, Cavello; and from Spain must have emigrated the family whose beautiful monument still exists in all its perfection



of finest art, in the old town of Verona—the same horse rampant, bell and rope, identical with the Spanish and English coat of arms of the family.

An engraved metallic plate was found among the effects of William Cabell, of Amherst county, now Nelson, Virginia, the same coat of arms of the Frome chapel, also of the monument at Verona. This William Cabell died in 1774, and was my father's great-grandfather. The first residence of our ancestor was in Buckingham county, just over the James river from his later home, "Union Hill." The first house was called "Soldier's Joy." I love those quaint old-fashioned names, which are never abandoned in Virginia. If you should ever be in that region you must hunt up those old homes; it may be but little remains of their old-time cheer, but even in their picturesque ruins they will interest you.

Our ancestor, William Cabell, emigrated to this country from England in the year 1720. He was a good scholar, and sur-





rounded himself in his forest home with a noble library. He was a surgeon and skilled in his profession, which he practiced within a wide sphere, was sagacious in business, and fond of rural sports; he died in 1774, before the advent of independence, but contributed four sons to the contest in which it was won. From the oldest son, William, we descend. Under the guidance of his accomplished father he passed his early years, availing himself of the literary advantages the paternal mansion afforded. Tall and muscular, his face bearing the Roman outline, which may yet be traced in his descendants, fond of rural sports, skilled in horsemanship, of engaging manners, he was the model of the young Virginian of his time.

But it is as he appeared at a later day in the councils that we seek to trace him. He was eminently conspicuous as a man of noble presence, of gallant bearing, and of undaunted spirit. He was a man of large wealth, and



managed his estates with that masterly skill with which a general superintends an army. What Washington was on the banks of the Potomac, Cabell was on the banks of the upper James. Nor was the hospitality of Mt. Vernon, if by the splendor of its exhibition it eclipsed that of the more modest Union Hill, more cordial, more comprehensive, or more refined.

There were, indeed, many traits of resemblance between the owners of these beautiful homes. Colonel Cabell was long a member of the House of Burgesses. He was a member of all the conventions held before that of May, 1776, and in this last mentioned body he voted for the resolution instructing the delegates of Virginia, in Congress, to propose independence. When the government under the constitution went into operation, he was returned to the Senate from the Amherst district, and subsequently a member of the House of Delegates. His public life



may be said to have closed with the adjournment of the Federal Convention.\*

## TOWLES.

My mother's family on both sides, was marked by military genius. Her father and grandfather, were both officers in the United States army, and did good service for their country. The one a major in the war of 1812, his father a Colonel in the Revolutionary war. He was badly wounded at the battle of Germantown, taken prisoner by the British, lost his health by long confinement in the miserable, unhealthy prison hulks, and at the close of the war threw up his commission and studied law, in which profession he gained eminence. Colonel Towles was a man of education and ability, love and talent for dramatic recitation, and a profound student of Shakespeare, whose plays he is said to

\* This sketch of our ancestor is taken from a di-course (at least in substance, if not *verbatim*), by Hugh Blair Grigsley, delivered in the chapel at William and Mary College, July 3, 1855.



have read with an intelligence and insight rarely excelled. He was the son of a clergyman of the Anglican Church, born in Wales, and emigrated to this country early in the eighteenth century, and settled in eastern Virginia—the tide water district. He had many sons and daughters, some of whom emigrated to Kentucky and Louisiana. Colonel Towles married Mrs. John Smith of Fredericksburg; her maiden name was Mary Chew. She was the daughter of Larkin Chew and Mary Beverly, daughter of Colonel Beverly. Mrs. Smith had one son in her first marriage, Colonel Larkin Smith, speaker of the House of Burgesses. Colonel Smith had many descendants, among them Colonel Albert Smith and Colonel Larkin Smith, officers in the Federal army at the breaking out of the Civil war, but went over to the southern side. My great-grandfather, Colonel Oliver Towles, and his wife, Mary Chew Towles, had three children, Major Oliver Towles, Captain Harry Towles, who was





in General Wayne's Legion, and fell in the celebrated battle at the rapids of the Maumee. Gen. Wayne spoke of him in his official reports as a "worthy and brave officer who fell in the first charge."

Fanny Towles married a brother of Andrew Stevenson, minister to England. Her descendants live in West Virginia.

Colonel Towles was a member of the "Society of the Cincinnati," an order formed by the officers of the American army at the close of the Revolutionary war, and was secretary of that body. My mother's father, Major Oliver Towles, was a man of remarkably handsome physique, unlike his father, who was a man of small stature, and in appearance bearing a strong resemblance to Mr. Madison.

My recollection of my grandfather is very distinct, though I must have been a child of only five years when he left home to go to the west. Missouri being then an extreme western state, it was an undertaking of enterprise, and involving far more discomfort



than now a journey around the world would involve. From this journey he never returned, He had intended to invest large sums of money in the west, for he was a man of wealth and had money at his command, and had he lived, probably millions would have come to his descendants. As it was he died among strangers, and sad to say lies in a stranger's grave, at the little village of Cape Girardeau. His sons made effort to discover and mark the grave in after years, but failed to find it, for all were gone who could have identified it.

One can hardly realize the state of things in the Mississippi valley in those days. St. Louis, though early settled, and several thousand inhabitants, was almost an outpost so far as inland connection affected its intercourse with states further east. Its outlet was by way of the Mississippi river to New Orleans, and long sea voyages connected it with the Atlantic border.

My grandfather Towles left a family of



eight children, five sons and three daughters. Two of the sons, Oliver and Thomas, removed to Louisiana—Oliver as a physician to Baton Rouge, Thomas a merchant, to New Orleans. William and Alfred also studied medicine, the former remaining in Virginia, the latter removing to Missouri. John died at an early age. They were men of sterling worth, gentlemen in the highest sense of the word, and honored in the communities where their homes were established. The daughters were women of great beauty and elegance. Of my mother I have spoken, and will further speak. The second daughter, "the beautiful Bessie Towles," as she was called in her day, became the wife of the able lawyer and cultivated gentleman, so well known throughout Virginia for his learning and wit—John Blair Dabney. The youngest daughter, less beautiful but full of all that is lovely and graceful in women, removed with her husband, Mr. Edward Sims, to Missouri.



## LEWIS.

My mother, on her maternal side, was descended from the Lewis's, who trace their ancestry to Jean Louis, of a Protestant family of Chartres, who fled to England about the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He joined the English army, and for his gallantry and valuable services was made field-marshal, Earl Ligonier and Baron Inneskillen. He was with Marlborough in Flanders, and attracted his attention at the storming of Liege. At Blenheim he was the only captain of his regiment who survived. At Menin he led the grenadiers who stormed the counterscarp. He fought at Malplaquet, where he was major of brigade. At Dettingen, as lieutenant-general, he gained still higher distinction. At Fontenoy the chief honor was due him, for the intrepidity with which he led the British infantry. In 1746 he was placed in command of the British forces in Flanders, but he was taken prisoner. He





was afterward restored to England, and appointed commander of the First Foot Guards. During his life he was in nineteen pitched battles, and twenty-five sieges. (See History of the Huguenots, by S. Smiles.)

We are descended from the eldest son of Jean Louis, who settled in Ireland, and whose son John emigrated to America, and settled in Augusta county, Virginia. His wife was Margaret Lynn. He was my great-great-grandfather. They had seven sons, all but one serving in the Revolutionary war. My great-grandfather, William Lewis, was the oldest son, and he married Margaret Montgomery, niece of General Montgomery who was killed at Quebec. General Montgomery and his brother, our ancestor, were descended from that Sir John Montgomery to whom Harry Percy yielded himself prisoner at the battle of Otterburn, 1388.

My grandmother was the beautiful Agatha Lewis, sister in a family of three daughters and seven sons—the men all famous in the



early wars of the country. Her brother, Captain Thomas Lewis, was on General Wayne's staff in the celebrated battle of the Maumee, and with his other aids-de-camp De Butte and Harrison—afterward General Harrison—was complimented by his commanding officer as faithful and gallant. In this same battle, as I have mentioned elsewhere, fell another of my mother's uncles, the brave and dashing Harry Towles. My grandmother's uncle was the renowned Major-General Andrew Lewis, friend and aid-de-camp of General Washington, who recommended General Lewis as his successor as commander-in-chief of the army, on his resignation.

So you see if your blood boils with patriotism, dear boys, and you are pushed on to brave feats, you may know that heredity is justifying herself—the Towles and the Lewis blood is asserting itself.

My grandmother's father, William Lewis, was the owner of thousands of acres of land in Greenbriar, and adjoining counties in Vir-



ginia. Vast mountain tracts, and rich valley lands, where flow those health-giving waters, now so much resorted to. He fixed his home at the Old Sweet Spring, and there my grandmother was born and passed her early years, drinking in the health and poetical spirit of her romantic, wild mountain home. How often have I sat at her knee, listening to tales of hair-breadth escapes from savages and wild beasts, founded on fact, but beautifully illuminated by her fine imagination and poetic fervor. She told me of how, as a little girl, she found her particular delight in the lovely mountain spur at the back of the house, where she, accompanied by her old mammy and little maid, erected her "baby house," and there were carried all her toys, and her dolls, and a red cloak was hung out to keep the foxes and the wolves away. Years after, when I went as a gay young girl in search of pleasure to the fashionable watering place, I lost no time in clambering to the top of "Bald Head," and found on its lonely



summit a little cairn of stones, doubtless the remains of the doll house put up by baby hands so many, many years ago. After looking over the grand mountain prospect, still the unbroken wilderness which had been contemplated with delight by eyes so long ago closed in death, I descended to rest myself on the porch of the old house built by my great-grandfather a hundred years ago, and refreshed myself with the delicious water which gushed from the rock, and took its sparkling course to the meadow below, babbling such tales of wonder to my excited imagination, that the sun had long set behind the opposite mountain before I returned to the busy, bustling life below, feeling, as I stepped along in the gloaming, through the sedgy, damp meadow, that my steps were guarded by the good, brave old Lewis's of long ago, and that I need have no fear in the gathering shadows of night.

My mother, Annie Maria Towles, was the eldest daughter of Oliver and Agatha Lewis





Towles. Brilliantly beautiful, and queen-like to the day of her death, in her forty-ninth year, and gifted and sweet-tempered as beautiful. The artistic taste, so marked in many of her descendants, doubtless comes from this highly sensitive, imaginative, and poetic nature, combined with the wonderful, practical ability to express itself in days when few facilities were offered for culture.

In all the little arts of beauty, I remember her development showing itself, in beautiful adornment of her home, in making with her own hands the lovely flowers which decorated our little hats, and creating for us the loveliest life-like wax dolls. Though entirely self-taught, her efforts with the pencil and brush were something remarkable. Her musical talent was very fine, and in music she had been well taught, both on piano and in voice. Her voice was especially melodious, both in singing and speaking. This is the mother of your grandmother Longworth, in whom were reproduced all the excellence, talent and



beauty of her mother. Landon Cabell Rives and Annie Maria Towles were married in Lynchburg, Virginia, April 26, 1815. They went immediately to their beautiful home, Bellevue, in Nelson county, where they continued to reside until 1829. In November of that year my father removed his family to Cincinnati.





#### IV.—CINCINNATI FIFTY YEARS AGO.

CINCINNATI in the thirties was, in many respects, a much more marked city than now; then deservedly bearing the name of "Queen of the West," for no other city claimed a rivalry. Chicago, which now in her rapid strides has left Cincinnati far behind, was but an insignificant settlement for far-seeing speculators. Beyond Missouri, a vast *terra incognita*, penetrated only by the adventurous hunter, with an occasional military outpost, as a protection against the savage Indians who still roamed over their great hunting grounds: Commercially, in those ante-railroad days, Cincinnati was an important outlet; situated on the great thoroughfare, it commanded a western and



southern trade which now is borne away in many directions. The beautiful hills then sloped down to the valley, still covered with the grand primeval forest: No destructive hand had yet invaded its depths, so in all its circle of green, the little city nestled close to the beautiful river, and its quay was one of its boasted ornaments, always lined with vast steamers—those monarchs of trade—which swept their majestic course through the great Mississippi to the far off south.

The social culture of Cincinnati at that time was remarkable; a tone of intellect and good taste prevailed, which gave character to the place as a center of intelligence and art. At this early period, Cincinnati was already the home of artists whose reputation was afterward world-wide. In society were men of intelligence and cultivation—gentlemen in the truest sense—and women whose elegance of manner and gracious ways, with well-trained, well-stored minds, would have adorned any position in which they might have been





placed. This was the society we had the good fortune to enter as we grew into womanhood. There were requirements then to enter society life which do not now exist, certain conventional rules which had to be obeyed, and which formed a great safeguard. Good taste prevailed in all modes of amusement and social entertainment, more refined taste, if not as much luxury; and in all things might be seen more of the development of intellectual and æsthetic pleasure, than of the material superfluities resulting from an increase of wealth. Families of culture and worth had influence—their modes of life, their ways of entertainment, were models for imitation, and standards of good taste. Elegant simplicity might be imitated by even those of slender means, and the consequence was a general kindly social interchange which made society what it should be—genial, ever-flowing, and the school of truest and best development.

Large balls and social gatherings differed



but little in character from assemblies of the present time. Dancing was more generally enjoyed, but the quadrille and reel were the dances of the times. Waltzes had just been introduced, but were frowned down by discreet matrons. This graceful dance was finally introduced as a strictly feminine affair; at last cousins of opposite sex were permitted the privilege, and so finally in whirled the giddy dance, sanctioned if not approved. Parties of special artistic and intellectual type were more frequent than now; musical parties were very general, and through two or three winters the musical parties of Mrs. Rives were much enjoyed, as occasions when might be heard a high style of music, productions of the best composers, instrumental and vocal, solo and quartette. All the accessories in company, flowers and refreshments, were in the exquisite taste which made our mother a marked member of Cincinnati society.

Both the daughters were cultivated musicians, and collected around them much talent



and skill. Literary parties, too, were much the fashion, and the "Semicolon" parties of Mrs. Stetson are still remembered as reunions where the talent, wit, and humor of the guests were brought out, and where music and dancing lent their aid. These were occasions of great enjoyment, and their uncere- monious character was shown by the number of guests being limited to the seating capacity of the rooms, and the ladies occupied themselves, while listening, in pretty fancy work and knitting. Many of the homes in those days were quite as artistically furnished as now. The walls of Mrs. Stetson's parlors were covered with fine pictures, statuary in the corners and niches, and flowers always filling the atmosphere with their sweet perfume. All this was over fifty years ago, when Cincinnati was a city of thirty thousand inhabitants, noted for its cleanliness and bright fresh atmosphere.

The most decided difference between Cincinnati of the past and present, is to be seen



in the hill-tops and outlets of the city of the valley. The vast city of residences on the hills had then no existence. When the Lane Seminary was built, in the early thirties, it was planted in an almost unbroken forest, not a half a dozen houses in all that region, and those generally the homes of the Kemper family—early settlers, and known as leaders in the Presbyterian church. The hills were then almost inaccessible except through the gorges. Where is now the high trestle-work of the Northern narrow gauge road, alongside of Gilbert avenue, was the beautiful, picturesque little Deer creek, running its course over rocky, pebbly bed, now and then spreading out in limpid pools, to the river beyond. A heavy forest shadowed its borders, a favorite nook for May-day crownings and wild flower picnics; the finest ferns abounded where now the “rag pickers” revel on the “dumping ground.”

On the eastern side of Gilbert avenue, now Eden Park, were the fine vineyards of





your great-grandfather, Mr. Nicholas Longworth, the source from whence flowed the noted Catawba wine, once Cincinnati's pride. So shut off and inaccessible was the place, that your grandfather's habit was to retire there every Sunday for seclusion. If it had been fifty miles from town it could not have been more shut out from the bustle below. The favorite drives were along the banks of the Ohio, above and below the city. And there were fine old country homes, where strawberry parties were given in the rosy days of June. No railroads interfered with the fine drives through the willow-shaded valleys, and fresh breezes and fine views made those drives very delightful. Finer "turn-outs," too, than are now seen, for then we depended more upon our own carriages. Public gardens were favorite places of resort, and your great-grandfather Longworth, always so fond of the cultivation of flowers, and trees, and fruits, interested himself in the establishment of the beautiful Apollonian



Garden, which occupied ground between Third street and the river, and from Pike street to the valley, taking in the lovely, gurgling little Deer creek. On this same little stream where is now situated the Good Samaritan Hospital, and those ungainly purlieus of East Sixth street, was the garden of a German—Schnetz—where was the finest spring I ever saw, bubbling up in a nest of rock-work all brilliant with brightest flowers and nodding ferns. Then, too, the Aviary was a place of delight, making the whole region around songful.

The buildings for business now are much finer than fifty years ago. • Then there were no stone front blocks towering to the clouds, but many beautiful residences, more beautiful than those which now exist in the heart of the city, were pulled down to give place to those magnificent business houses—the beautiful residences of the Footes, and Greenes, and Stetsons, at the corner of Vine and Third—across Vine street the fine old



mansion in the midst of trees, standing in the middle of the square now partially occupied by the Burnet House, first the residence of Judge Burnet, afterward of Mr. Wiggins. The beautiful residence of Mr. George W. Jones, grandfather of Mrs. William Carson, on Fourth between Vine and Walnut, and just opposite the stone front ample homes of Mr. Groesbeck and Mr. Lawler. Further west the residences of Messrs. Caleb and Jonathan Bates, between Vine and Race, south side; at the head of Broadway the fine old Pendleton mansion; on Seventh and Elm the beautiful Burnet home; the handsome residence of General Lytle, corner of Third and Lawrence; dozens of others, all gone, and well deserving the praise given by a writer of note, who visited Cincinnati in 1834, and described the city as "Well built, generally of brick. There are some pretty churches and noble private residences of cut stone and stucco. Of the latter, there are several with greater preten-



sions to architectural beauty than any which I remember in New York."\*

Of all these fine old homes, the only ones left are the Longworth house on Pike street, now the residence of Mr. David Sinton. The same house, of ample size and beautiful arrangement, stands, but the grounds, though still large and well kept, are not what once they were when the gardens and greenhouses spread out over the entire square. The beautiful Lytle home, too, now occupied by Mrs. Josephine Lytle Foster, which once was the center of grandest hospitalities—both her father and grandfather prominent in political life, and men of great ability. Once this fine home occupied the entire square, and was entered through great gates in English style, heavy stone pillars surmounted by balls of stone—to my childish eyes the picture of grandeur.

The museums of the old-time Cincinnati were prominent features of interest, and

\* "A Winter in the West," by Charles Fenno Hoffman, 1834.





although not strictly art museums of the highest type, were still places of pleasure and profit. I have often wondered where has disappeared the many relics of Indian life, fine collections illustrative of the wild primeval days, stores of the wampum and feather-work in which the Indians were so skilled, no longer to be seen. The great hall filled with groups of wax work was unflinching in interest; life-like presentments of noted men and women; the "American Beauty," gorgeous in lace and tinsel; humorous groups; pathetic groups, and, I am sorry to say, horrible groups, representations of Anger, Revenge, etc. Fascinating was the calling forth of Samuel by the witch of Endor. Very significant was this display of wax work, for it was the first exhibition of the great genius, Hiram Powers—here was the beginning of one destined to a world-wide fame, and the American Beauty was the first conception of those far higher creations which came at a later day. Connected with the museum was an idea so original, so weird, so full of horror, that one



can hardly conceive how it could have entered into the mind of man to give it expression. The "Infernal Regions" sprung from the fanciful brain of a Frenchman, Monsieur Dorfeuille, the proprietor of the museum. It was supposed to be a further expression of the conception of the great Italian poet. All that could be devised of the horrible was put into action, hissing serpents, grinning skeletons, and every startling power of electric fluid. Theologians of the severe school pronounced it a great moral force, and with truth, if fear is the power which brings man to perfection. Discreet matrons denounced the exhibition as a fertile source of nightmare and all manner of nervous disorders. The sense of the horrible is so keen in man's nature, that I am sorry to say the "Infernal Regions" were very popular.

The old Bazaar you must all remember in its declining years of dilapidation. It was situated on Third street east of Broadway, and was at one time a conspicuous building in



Cincinnati. It was erected by Mrs. Trollope during her residence in this city, and was intended to be a Turkish Bazaar—and was so arranged at first with its little shops—but the plan failed, and it was finally used as a center for balls and fairs and other public gatherings. At first a noble cupola crowned the center rotunda, and towered conspicuously, for it was well proportioned, and rose high above the surrounding houses. I do not know exactly when the old Bazaar was shorn of this glory, but it is only a few years since the entire building was taken down to give place to the Lorraine flats. There were some fine features in the old building—the stone carvings were especially good—and we possessed ourselves of a specimen, which we had imbedded in a wall on our premises, and this is perhaps the last relic of a building once notable in Cincinnati. The other materials have gone as the smoke and the mist to enter into other combinations.

After our removal to Cincinnati we made



frequent returns to Virginia, and thus kept up a strong bond of affection with old friends and old scenes in the old home. Journeys were then made altogether on steamboats, and in stage-coaches. The railroad system was still in its infancy, and experiments were being made on the Atlantic coast to prove its many advantages. Our journeys were made as far as Guyandotte on steamboat, where my father chartered a stage-coach for our accommodation—the advantages being, that we were at liberty to make the day's journey as long or as short as was found convenient and pleasant. The steamboats in those days were delightful modes of travel, and even the small boats, made for low water, and called stern-wheel boats, were arranged with every comfort which could be needed; the ample cabins, and well provided tables, always pleasant company, and the smooth, easy motion, made reading, sewing, and writing, quite possible, and charming travel for days. The beautiful moonlight nights, where sitting on the "guards," as the





verandahs around the boat were called, or to walk on the upper deck in the silvery moonlight, and drink in the cool draughts from the "cisterns of the midnight air," and look forth over the calm, quietly flowing river to the beautiful shores wooded to the water's edge. No longer the wild yell of savages as of yore, but the reposeful cooing of the dove, or the solemn whoop of the midnight owl, the baying of the watchful dogs suggestive of peaceful, guarded homes. This was fifty years ago, the delightful voyage on the Ohio river; not less enjoyable was the land travel. Five days over the mountains and picturesque valleys of Virginia, stopping every night for rest at comfortable mountain inns, where good appetites were satisfied by tender steaks of venison or the richer meat of the bear, delicious mountain trout, just caught from rushing streams at hand, and such buckwheat cakes as only those sturdy mountain people can make. Perhaps the invigorating air of the mountain



gave the zest, but such are my remembrances of the good cheer.

Those inns were kept by a class of well-to-do Germans who were the early settlers of the mountains of Virginia, and had kindly ways, and big hearts, and full purses. So there was great emulation for the highest reputation. Then, too, such pride was taken in the magnificent horses which bore along the brightly painted coaches, with a Mr. Weller on the box, supreme in authority. I can now in imagination enjoy to the fullest extent the beautiful walks in ascending the mountains, bearing great loads of azalea and rhododendron, and getting breathless to the coach in waiting at the top of the mountain. Patiently had they waited; for every grand view, every wayside interest had made us linger long. The railroad which is now the transit through the mountains, passes through grand gorges, skirts the shores of the New river, dashes through tunnels. The stage coach road climbed the mountains, passed over the



summits, and gained long stretches of vast views. Comparison can not be made between the looking up and the looking over; they are equally grand, but very different. It is one thing to gaze with averted eye from the base of the "Hawk's Nest" to its dizzy height, another to stand trembling on the verge of the stupendous cliff, and mark the far off river winding like a silver thread at its base.

The journey from Cincinnati to our Virginia home occupied more than a week—now made in thirty-six hours. We once made so odd and primitive a journey that I must tell you of it.

On a return from Virginia, when we reached the Ohio river we found it was no longer "La Belle Riviere," but a bed of sand banks, a little lazy stream winding its course among them. No steamboats, of course, not even the stern wheel, requiring only a few inches of water. Flat boats had been fitted up, but were not enough to accommodate the crowd of passengers already gathered at Guyandotte. My



mother—full always of resources, and equal to any emergency—immediately suggested a large steamboat yawl. As we had already an efficient man servant with us, and my mother's maid, it seemed quite possible we might make ourselves comfortable and have a jolly voyage, so my father adopted the idea, and we were soon provided with a large row-boat, arranged also for a sail, and two able men to manage it. These men knew the river and its shores well, and informed us that we could find every night good lodgings on shore, especially on the Kentucky side, where fried chickens and corn bread abounded. The boat could accommodate twelve, our party with servants numbered eight, so after the two oarsmen were counted we had still room for two, and thus were enabled to invite two very agreeable, entertaining gentlemen to join us. They were exceedingly grateful, for they had been waiting days to get off. My sister and I had our guitar with us, and both played well, and lent our voices in duets to the instrument. We





had chess, and cards, and dominoes, and nice books, and sketching materials, a good store of provisions, fruits, etc. So we started, as merry a set as ever left the shore, and drifted lazily along through six beautiful autumn days, stopping every night at sunset, our good servant landing a mile or two before us to get lodging for the night. All went well until the last day, when, about twelve miles from Cincinnati, we were caught in a fearful storm of rain and wind, and in attempting to land stuck in a sand bank and had to accept all the fury of the storm, for as soon as the umbrellas were raised, the wind blew them inside out, and they had to be abandoned. By great effort we were released, but only to find that we had to make our progress, in faith, for the night came on in storm and blackness. At last the city lights appeared, and the long line of steamboats at the wharf sent forth welcome light. Our hearts were glad, for in fancy we were already at home. A sudden lurch, a dashing up of the prow of the boat, and there



we were, mounted on a rock. Nothing was to be done but to give the alarm; our cries for aid brought instant response, and a good pilot came out and brought us safely to shore. A little while and we were at home, drenched to the skin, but with thankful hearts for our rescue. Bright fires, and hot coffee, and kind friends, made all right, and no after trouble came—home was a cure for all we had endured. At last the disagreeable was forgotten, and we only remembered the dreamy drifting through those hazy autumn days, bright tinted forests, and sunsets of golden splendor.

The home of my father and mother after they came to Cincinnati—the home on Race street above Fourth, from which your grandmother, Mrs. Annie Rives Longworth, went forth as a bride—was noted for its constantly flowing hospitalities, exercised always in good taste and heartiness, by a host and hostess of high-bred manners and gracious ways. In all the little indescribable elegancies of a well appointed dinner table, and pleasantly ar-



ranged evening entertainments, no home in Cincinnati could excel our own.

As my sister and myself grew up to womanhood, we had the great advantage of a father and mother who made home a place of sunshine and cheer, who were so attractive as to draw within their circle the highest and best. Music always gave great interest to our entertainments, and my sister and myself were well prepared to lend our aid. Every opportunity was given us for improvement of every talent with which we were endowed, and at that time the schools of Cincinnati, and teachers in every branch of art, could not be excelled in any city of the country. We both had the advantage of being for several years under the training of that best of educators and most accomplished of women, Caroline Lee Hentz, known in the literary world as novelist and dramatist. The school of Mr. and Mrs. Hentz in the training of women was, in its way, a university. Ancient and modern languages, mathematics (especially as applied



to astronomy and geometry), the physical sciences, moral philosophy, English literature and history, systematic training in literary composition, music, drawing, painting, dancing, calisthenics, the art of needle work -- in a word, every thing needful for full development, and all under the guidance of a woman of noble character, with a magnetism which drew with a responsive feeling to her warm heart all who were intrusted to her care.

I have never known any one who possessed more of the true spirit of chivalry than my father. In my mother he saw all his highest ideal of womanhood. His devotion to her, not only in feeling, but in outward demonstration, marked his daily life. She, on her part, had only need to express the beauty of her inner nature in love and truth, to gain the hearts of all who came under her influence. In this clear atmosphere of affection and trust, our early lives were developed, and in all the store of memories of those days, there is nothing I would blot out. Such a life is worth living,





and the unselfish influences of such a childhood make an impress never to be effaced. As I wish these reminiscences not only to be a record of facts, but foot-prints to guide you, I ask you to note well these two beautiful lives, and to feel how, through many years, can extend the holy influence of a home of peace and love.





V.—MEMORIES OF ROOKWOOD.

ANNIE RIVES, second daughter of Landon Cabell Rives and Annie Maria Rives, was born on the 10th of October, 1822. She came into the world bright and beautiful, and all through her life was a joy and blessing to all who came within her influence. Her childhood was the delight of home, her girlhood lovely and pure, and sparkling, full of genius, originating works of beauty in every direction; her soul, beaming with religious light, threw its radiance far beyond the home circle. She was married on the 13th of May, 1841, to Joseph Longworth, whose fine intellect and keen apprehension of good, fitted him to appreciate the beautiful qualities of her who was destined to become his wife.



The ceremony took place at the old St. Paul's Church, Fourth street. These were your grandparents. Their oldest son, Nicholas, was born at the house of his grandfather, Doctor Landon C. Rives, 121 East Third street. This property afterward came into the possession of Mr. Joseph Longworth, who wished that, as the birthplace of his eldest son, it might always remain in the hands of the family.

It was in the absence of your grandfather—in the year 1847—that the present site of Rookwood was selected. He had requested your grandmother to amuse herself in his necessary absence, by driving about the "Hills," and satisfying her taste in regard to the locality of their future home. They had already decided that it should be removed from the noise and dirt of the city. I always accompanied your grandmother in her drives; indeed, in all our pleasures, all our pursuits, we were almost one. Never were two sisters more thoroughly identified, and in marrying



we had the good fortune to feel that our husbands were always fast friends. I remember well the delight of my sister as she explored the Grandin road, then a mere country lane—for, beyond the turn at Mr. Hooper's gate, there were no residences requiring more than a wagon road for approach. As the beautiful view burst upon us, your grandmother in ecstasy exclaimed, "Here must be our home."

The hill upon which the Rookwood house is now situated, was a corn field. The only trees were the hackberry and sycamore, which still stand, a wild cherry, long since sacrificed to the gaining of a vista, and three fine old locusts, which gradually failed and were cut away. All the beautiful growth of Rookwood is the planting of your grandfather; every beautiful oak which now adorns the lawn I remember as a shrub, not higher than a middle sized man. For the purpose of a more decided verdure until these trees developed, there were many evergreens planted—lovely hemlocks, and white





pinces and Norway firs—which attained large size before they interfered with the deciduous trees. Many of the family regretted their destruction, but when the large expanse of lawn was developed, and the fine vistas opened out, then all were satisfied, and acknowledged the foresight and judgment of the designer. The wagon road, by which we approached what seemed to be quite a hill, was through the beechwoods, and such a tangle that we could hardly get through. We climbed over a fence to get into the corn field, and clambered up the hill hoping for a view of the river, but in this we were disappointed, and the first idea was that across the road, where the view was to had, was the proper site for the house. It was a curious fact that the place selected by your grandmother, had for years been in possession of the Howells, the maternal branch of your grandfather's family, and there as a little boy he had passed his Saturdays in enjoyment of all country sports, for it was yet the residence of Mrs.



Howell. The decision for the future home was soon arrived at, as in every thing your grandmother was the guiding spirit—it was only for her to express a wish to have it gratified.

Preparations were soon made for building, and twenty years of happiness, such as falls to the lot of few, were passed in this lovely home. It was several years before a name could be decided upon, and at last a seeming chance brought to a conclusion the long mooted question. In those days, more frequently than later, migratory birds passed in flocks over the hills, sometimes resting on the tree tops of the dense forest. Every year a congress of crows appeared, and on one occasion hundreds, making the place resound with their cawings. Some one remarked the place ought to be called "Crow's Nest." No, said the more refined and poetical mistress, let it be "Rookwood;" and so ever since it has been Rookwood.

At that time the East Walnut Hills was



always spoken of as "the country," indeed, it was four miles outside the corporation of Cincinnati. There was no communication with the city by street cars, nor telephone; carriages over rough roads, and the lumbering omnibus, were the only ways of transportation. No lamps at night, always danger of upsets and of highwaymen, so through difficulties were hospitalities extended; nevertheless the beautiful Rookwood home always rang with the mirth of jovial company. An occurrence illustrative of the difficulties of entertaining at that time, was often told by your grandfather. You can not judge by the present level, good road, of the hill and dale which at that time made the Grandin road. You may form an idea when I tell you that the road passed on a level with the gardener's cottage which is now on a high bank above the road, and at the Storer entrance was some feet below the present level, the top of the hill having been cut down and thrown in the valley. The decoration of



the unsightly bank was a subject of earnest thought with your grandfather, who finally made the cliff-like wild garden, which he considered the accomplishment of genius. You may imagine from this picture of the road, what a tough pull it was up the ascent when the mud was over the fetlocks of the horses.

On the occasion of a party at Rookwood, the night being dark and rainy, a carriage in approaching was stuck in the mud, and the horses obstinately refused to budge an inch. Before long another carriage came, and then another, and another, until there was a line of nearly a dozen. Help was sought from the house, lanterns brought out, fence rails dislodged, horses urged, lashed, and implored, but to no use. The occupants of the carriages were compelled to betake themselves across the lawn, through slush and rain, to be all the merrier when they reached the brilliantly lighted house, and were warmed by a gracious welcome before great blazing wood





fires. To make the affair more amusing, the offending carriage belonged to the gentleman without a flaw, Cincinnati's Bayard, Mr. Wyllys Pomeroy, whom all old Cincinnatians remember as evincing his great politeness in begging pardon of a lamp post, against which he had run in the dark.

I wish I could picture to you, in all its glowing colors, the life at Rookwood in those early days. There was a grace about your grandmother which threw a charm over all her surroundings. She was exceedingly hospitable in her inclinations, and had a wide circle of friends who loved to come under her influence. The dear old home resounded with merriment and good cheer. Your grandmother herself being an artist, drew around her talent in every branch of art, and your grandfather uniting a high artistic taste to a devotion to his beautiful wife, indulged her in all her fancies. Many were the ways of entertaining quite out of the ordinary way at that



time—private theatricals, tableaux, charades, etc.

A very marked occasion was a Christmas, which in its arrangements and completeness never has had its equal here. The festivities lasted a whole week, and the house was filled with guests. In every available nook, arrangements were made for their accommodation. Each evening a novelty was presented in the way of entertainment, to which a house full of friends would be invited. As among the guests were two artists, all decorations and tableaux were arranged with exquisite taste and skill. Holly branches, ivy and mistletoe, decorated the walls—nothing could have been more charming.

Your grandmother loved and enjoyed flowers, and gave great attention to their cultivation. Such a profusion of beautiful roses—at one time Rookwood boasted a variety of over two hundred. Her large heart inclined her to make many happy by the distribution of her treasures. Your grandfather



had secured a French gardener who was trained in all the best development of French ways, he was ambitious and industrious, and equally successful in the flower garden, the vegetable garden, and the conservatory. His hot-house grapes were as fine as I have ever seen; the mushroom bed, the artichokes, and many vegetables quite unknown in this country, flourished under his skillful hand. Fruits which have since died out on the place, were in richest profusion. You would not believe me were I to tell you the size and perfection of the peaches, and the excellence of the melons. This excellent gardener died very suddenly, and was a very great loss. After this your grandfather gave up his interest in fruits and vegetables, and devoted himself to the fine trees which are now the glory of Rookwood.

A lovely custom was that of having tea on the lawn, on bright, dry summer evenings. A pretty picture it was, the beautiful mother, arrayed as she always was, in purest white or



heavenly blue, with her bright lovely children around her, and rarely without guests, laps full of flowers, and happy hearts. The old hackberry tree—which stands a noble monument of the happy past—was the favorite resort of the children; under its wide-spreading branches was their playground, and from its sturdy limbs hung their hammock. Quiet and peaceful was the outlook from the verandah—the sweet twitter of many birds, the clear call of the robin from the woods, the air laden with the perfume of flowers, the happy little forms busy with all their innocent sports; the beautiful mother tranquilly interesting herself with her pencil, of which she never tired, drinking in the music of cheery little voices, and the deeper tones of a voice at her side, uttering such a wealth of poetic lore, with which the wonderful memory was filled. Ah, those were bright days! Dark days came, but she was spared all the sorrow which was to come to other hearts.

The hill upon which the Storer house is





now so beautifully planted, was a sheep pasture without a single tree, and was the favorite spot for mushrooms, where on dewy autumn mornings might be gathered basketfuls of the fairy food. The flock of Southdowns which roamed over the meadow were the admiration of all visitors at Rookwood; indeed, it was for the picturesque effect that they were given their range. Many plans were made by the happy master and mistress, some carried into effect, others not to be realized. Nicholas was to inherit Rookwood, the home. Landon was to have his home on the "circle" at the east of the house, and on the hill west was to be built the home for "Ia"; the last was carried out, dear Nicholas lived to inherit the home, dear Landon was called hence before he needed an earthly mansion.

The "Garden" of the children, as it was called, was down in the "thicket." The spot was so endeared by association—there so many happy hours were passed. Rustic seats were placed, and my sister with her sketch book,



and Mr. Longworth with his volumes of Tennyson, Longfellow, and Carlyle, with the accompanying merry child voices, made happy hours never to be forgotten. No spot to them was so dear, and here it was, in the calm of the summer sunset, in the presence of the evening star, that they vowed to each other that this should be their Campo Santo; that here, after the toil of life was over, their bodies should rest.

Your grandmother loved the companionship of young people, and she always made the house gay with young life. I wish to mention two or three of her loved young friends, because of the continued pleasant association of the descendants. The lovely Fannie Goodman, now Mrs. L. B. Harrison, and Katie Greene, afterward Mrs. Roelker. These, among many others, were my sister's especial favorites. Miss Greene's beautiful musical talent was, in accord with her own fine tastes, and they had much pleasure in blending their musical abilities on harp and piano. Your



grandmother was an accomplished harpist, and often accompanied her beautiful voice on this graceful instrument.

Another friend and schoolmate, Mary Wright, now Mrs. Curwen, amiable and brilliant in intellect, was a great delight always to Mr. Longworth. Fannie Goodman was full of all that beauty and freshness which makes a young girl a charm in a household. I tell you of all these things because I wish to make the Past a reality to you, and its actors not mere puppets, but living, breathing realities, to be loved and admired. Rookwood was always a home of attraction to men and women of good taste. Rare visitors from abroad were gathered around the hospitable board. The master and mistress of this beautiful home seemed to possess a magnetism which drew into their circle all that was noblest and best.

Your grandfather's wonderful retentive memory, and his dramatic talent, gave great zest to his power as an agreeable host. There



was a charm about your grandmother which was not easily defined, an imperceptible influence which flowed from a pure, loving soul, equipped with all that makes woman attractive.

In these ancestral sketches I confine myself to ancestors of your grandmother, Mrs. Annie Rives Longworth. It would not be in accordance with my plan to attempt any investigation of your Longworth ancestry, but I should feel that I had failed in an obligation, did I not, in passing, give you a glimpse of your great-grandmother, Mrs. Nicholas Longworth. Of your great-grandfather you will always hear much as a man of intellect, of wealth, and of enterprise, a patron of art, and the introducer of the grape culture and wine making in this country, and in doing this, a benefactor who will not be forgotten; but the unobtrusive virtue and excellencies of woman are soon forgotten. Mrs. Longworth had grown to womanhood in the early years of Cincinnati, and was identified with the most refined experiences of society life at that





time. She was a woman of great dignity and strength of character, a sincere Christian, in all her ways an efficient worker in the early life of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, and continuing her membership there until her death. She occupied her position, as mistress of the most hospitable and elegant home in Cincinnati, in a queenly manner. At seventy years and upward, her figure was so erect, her step so light, her color so fresh, that she impressed herself on all as a fine looking and remarkable woman. In conversation she was bright, and expressed herself well; her memory was excellent of the pioneer days, and of the gay and happy life of early Cincinnati, in which the officers of Fort Washington, and their families, had so large a part. Seekers after historical facts were always interested in her intelligent information.

Mrs. Longworth was a notable housekeeper, and the elegance of her dinners, and the brilliancy of the balls given in that fine old Pike street mansion, can never be forgotten



by those who still live to tell of it. No stranger of note ever came to Cincinnati who did not enjoy the hospitality of this home of taste and refinement, in the midst of its highly cultivated grounds and green-houses, then occupying the entire square. It is worthy of note, and I should like to impress upon you the fact, that fifty years ago the tone of society in Cincinnati was higher than now imagined—style of living, manners which could stand along side of present ways, and not suffer in the comparison. I have already given you a more detailed picture of what Cincinnati was in by-gone days.

I have confined myself to the direct line of your ancestors. If I had diverged into collateral sketches I might have added much interest to the book, for there are many fine characters among our lineage—honorable men and lovable women—of whom I might speak, and whose pictures would adorn this volume; but my object is accomplished in showing you from whence you spring. It is a curious fact,



worthy of note, that marked peculiarities exist through a long line of ancestry, that heredity shows itself in a way regularly throughout; but the more curious fact is, that at long intervals not only traits of character but similarity of feature will come out. I think that neither physiologists nor psychologists, have ever attempted to account for this strange freak; intervals sometimes of many generations may occur, and lo! appears almost identical the ancestor of long ago. It is not so startling to see physical features descend with regularity, as the Hapsburg lip, the Wellington nose, the Cabell eyes, or the Lewis eye-brow, or traits of character which may come by imitation or education; but to see peculiarities lie dormant for centuries and then return, is something we can not explain.

Wonderfully interesting are the old English portrait galleries; and family sketches, if kept up, would disclose the inner man in the same interesting way that these galleries do the physical peculiarities.



You will find at the close of this volume a number of blank pages, which I hope will be used by each one of you to carry on in your generation what I have begun. After a while these notes will become very valuable to him who will come up in future generations to carry on the history of our lineage. I feel so fully the value of such a record, that I wish to inspire the same feeling into your hearts.

In recording these family sketches and reminiscences, my dear nieces and nephews, I have had much enjoyment, which will be greatly enhanced by the thought that I shall give you some pleasant hours, but the greatest satisfaction I have is, that I have fulfilled a duty which rests upon some one individual in each family line in every age, to record the good deeds and good traits of ancestors, and carry on the connecting links, which I hope for us, will be continued through many future generations.

Noble deeds, and manly and womanly ways





in those who go before us, are beacon lights, and incentives to a true and useful life. I would have you to keep for your motto those words, "*Virtute dignus avorum;*" let them shine before you in letters of gold, and inspire you with those high aspirations which will lead each one of you to the life of a good and faithful child of God.







MEMORANDA.













